



Meeting note

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| Project name | Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project |
| File reference | N/A |
| Status | Final |
| Author | The Planning Inspectorate |
| Date | 23 October 2019 |
| Meeting with | Anglian Water (Applicant) |
| Venue | Friary Temple Quay |
| Meeting objectives | Project introduction meeting |
| Circulation | All attendees |

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely. It was explained that names of attendees (personal data) would not be published, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Project Introductions

The Applicant stated that it is in the early stages of planning to make an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the relocation of its existing Cambridge waste water and sludge treatment plant at Cowley Road, to a new location within the Cambridge sewage catchment area. The Applicant clarified that if this development proceeds, it will align with the goals of Cambridge City Council and South Cambs District Council and their anticipated Area Action Plan. The Applicant stated that the existing site could make way for a potential 8,000 homes, and commercial space expansion.

The Applicant estimated that the new development could utilise half the amount of land it was currently using. The possibility of the development providing treatment for wastewater from proposed new housing at Waterbeach New Town was mentioned. The Applicant outlined that its draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) has been prepared which it invited comments from the Inspectorate on.

The Applicant explained that whilst the development was not specifically identified in the National Environment Plan or any National Policy Statement (NPS), the Applicant explained how the proposed development was an NSIP under section 29 of the PA2008 with reference to it having a capacity of exceeding a population equivalent of 500,000.

The Applicant queried whether the Inspectorate might know if the NPS for waste water (designated in 2012) would be renewed within the lifetime of their application. The Inspectorate informed them that it is not responsible for the designation of NPSs but that they are not currently aware of any plans for this NPS to be revised or updated. The Applicant was advised not to rely on potential new policy updates but instead, make it transparent as to why this development is necessary within the applicable national and local planning policy framework and seek their own legal advice in this regard.

The Applicant explained it has a good working relationship with the relevant local authorities, but that issues could potentially arise if any Area Action Plan is reliant upon the construction of the development. The Inspectorate suggested the Applicant discuss the Local Impact Report process with the relevant local planning authorities throughout pre-application consultation, as they could mention overlapping evidence bases with the Area Action Plan process.

Indicative Programme

The Applicant is currently determining its site selection and as such the limits of deviation are yet to be decided. The Inspectorate enquired whether the consultation will

help determine the site and surveying techniques used. The Applicant responded that the process will be heavily influenced by the consultation.

At present its intention was to submit the application in 2021.

Approach to EIA

The Inspectorate recommended the Applicant consider any temporal overlap between the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Request and the community consultation process under s42 and s47 of the PA2008. Where these stages overlap, there is potential for confusion between the separate statutory processes under the PA2008 and EIA Regulations for all consultation bodies. Additionally, that the Applicant should be mindful of the timing, and resources around Christmas for local authorities and statutory parties. The Applicant should also be aware that many statutory consultees (including the Environment Agency (EA) and Natural England) are under significant resource pressure, and that it can be helpful to provide them with advanced notice of scoping requests and statutory consultation periods.

The Inspectorate highlighted that applicants' EIA scoping report often do not provide the necessary information to properly justify scoping aspects and matters out of their environmental statements (ES). The Inspectorate advised the applicant to consider its timescales around submission of any scoping request, ensuring sufficient information to meaningfully inform the scoping consultation process with the timings. The Applicant noted that optimal ecology survey seasons in particular were part of its thinking in its current scoping request programme.

It was inferred that due to the current stage of the project and baseline data collected, it seems unlikely it will be able to seek to scope out many environmental aspects or matters from their ES.

The Applicant also explained that the development would likely require a Environmental Permit. The Inspectorate clarified that an Environmental Permit cannot be consented through the DCO process, and that the Applicant would have to apply for a permit from the EA separately. Annex B to the Inspectorates Advice note 11 provides advice from the EA on this matter. The Inspectorate also questioned what the EA's view is about the location of the proposed development. The Applicant stated that the drivers for site selection are operational, economic, planning, environmental and community characteristics. The Applicant further elaborated that for one of the option sites there is also a recycling site nearby, which is an area of no landscape value despite being greenbelt. If the EIA Scoping Request is to be progressed before a final site selection, the Inspectorate suggested that any EIA scoping request should include an area covering all site options being considered. However the "options" within should be carefully explained and not so broad so as to limit the ability of EIA consultation bodies to make meaningful comments on the scope of the ES.

The Applicant was advised of the Inspectorate's timeframe for scoping and in particular that it requires the GIS shape file 10 working days ahead of submission of the scoping request in order to prepare the list of consultation bodies in advance.

Land and Compulsory Acquisition

The Applicant outlined that it intended to use appropriate land referencing practices for the option sites, including main owners and access and are yet to reference connecting infrastructure.

The Applicant raised matters regarding the ability of the Secretary of State to grant access to land under s53 of the PA2008. Although the Applicant is considering whether it might seek these powers in order to get permission to survey some land owned by third parties, the Applicant believed it is unlikely to do so within the project timeframes. At this stage the Applicant hopes such powers will not be required and that they will be able to agree necessary access to undertake their environmental survey works and inform a robust ES.

The Inspectorate highlighted that the linear aspect of the scheme would involve more people and, dependant on what is selected, may affect the number of affected persons. Parties could potentially make a claim and the Applicant could be at risk if they failed to properly identify them. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to consider their approach to this i.e. will they use the zone of influence approach, distance from red line boundary etc.

Next Steps

The Inspectorate informed the Applicant that it should be very clear on how it had regard to the consultation process and what may or may not be changed as a result. Even if a scheme is refined to a point where it did not need to make changes.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed

- Next meeting post-scoping late January / February
- The Inspectorate to send the Applicant details required to set up the project webpage